



Canadian Agricultural Safety Week, March 14 – 20, 2010

FACT SHEET #9

Farm safety audits made easy

Farm safety audits need not be a daunting task. For many, the hard part seems to be actually getting started. However *everyone* benefits from a farm safety audit by having a safer home and workplace – and it is easier than you think!

“*Plan • Farm • Safety*” is the theme of this three-year Canadian Agricultural Safety campaign. Each aspect of the theme will be promoted over the next three years. This year the campaign will promote “Plan” with safety walkabouts and planning for safety. In the second year, the focus will be on “Farm” including implementation, documentation and training. In the third year, emphasis will be on “Safety” including assessment, improvement and further development of safety systems. The “Plan” yearlong campaign will be launched with Canadian Agricultural Safety Week (CASW), from March 14 to 20. The Canadian Federation of Agriculture (CFA) and Canadian Agricultural Safety Association (CASA) deliver CASW in partnership with Farm Credit Canada (FCC) and Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada.

“Ensuring the safety of workers is an important part of farm management,” says Greg Stewart, FCC President and CEO. “Performing a safety audit and having a safety plan are two important components that should not be overlooked when developing a successful business plan.”

There are many agricultural and commodity specific web sites that offer good advice with farm safety audit templates. Here is a link to one developed by the Workplace Health, Safety and Compensation Commission in New Brunswick and is available in both English and French:

http://www.worksafenb.ca/docs/Farm_Safety_Audit_Workbook_e.pdf

Having a safe farm operation helps you meet three important business objectives. First, is the ethical component. Ensuring a safe workplace is the right thing to do. Second, is the legal component. All employers have legal obligations that must be met and regular safety audits help to achieve this. And the final component is financial. A safe workplace can decrease the costs of injuries, losses, insurance premiums and of course human anguish and suffering.

Here are eight easy steps to complete your plan:

1. Inspect your farm using the above Farm Safety Audit.
2. Evaluate each item and set priorities.
3. Transfer items onto the safety plan in order of priority.
4. Determine the most effective corrective actions to be taken.
5. Set deadlines for completing the corrective actions.

6. Evaluate the costs of the corrective actions.
7. Implement the corrective actions and verify that they have not created another hazard.
8. Repeat these inspections on a regular basis to assess your progress and to identify any new problems.

How often should a farm safety audit be reviewed? Ongoing inspections should be completed monthly and a thorough audit should be done yearly as well as with each new employee as they join your workplace as part of their orientation training, and with all workers whenever a new piece of machinery is added to the workplace.

The CFA, CASA, FCC and AAFC want to remind Canadian farmers that “*Plan • Farm • Safety.*”

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*** Free photos and cartoons are available to accompany this article at www.casa-acsa.ca .

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